



MEDIA RELEASE
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NEW ACCREDITED SHORT COURSE LAUNCHED FOR TOUR GUIDES

Thanks to a grant from Tourism WA to the WA Hospitality & Tourism Industry Training Council (WAHTITC), Western Australia has launched the country's first accredited weekend training course for Tour Guides.

WAHTITC has appointed leading WA touring and training company, Global Gypsies, to develop and facilitate the course with input from the State's top Tour Guides. Accreditation will be through Pilbara TAFE under the competency *THFTG05B Lead Tour Groups*.

The basic introductory two-day course is designed for urban, regional and remote area Tour Guides who may be permanent employees, casual, free-lance or volunteers. The pilot program will be trialed in Perth and once it is up and running there are plans to expand it to other areas.

The course will comprise both theoretical and practical content with emphasis on hands-on activities and role plays. It will be held at Murdoch University and incorporate an overnight bush camp.

The content will include such generic guiding skills as interpretive presentation, customer service, duty of care, basic driving, safety, risk management, dealing with emergencies, leadership, cultural awareness, environmental responsibility, conflict resolution and more. Courses will be held on December 6 - 7, 2008; January 31 – February 1, February 21 - 22 and April 4 - 5, 2009.

Global Gypsies has been committed to Tour Guide training since the company's inception over a decade ago. Jeremy Perks (former FACET Golden Guide of the Year) and Jan Barrie, the Directors of Global Gypsies, say, "Australia is one of the few countries in the world which does not require its Tour Guides to be accredited. Our goal is to have as many WA Tour Guides trained as possible and, ideally, accredited in some way to improve the quality of Tour Guiding in our State and deliver a better - and safer - visitor experience. We also want to give the profession the status, respect and esteem it deserves and already enjoys in many other parts of the world."

Excellent courses of a longer duration are available at a number of learning institutions throughout Australia. However, believing that an inexpensive short course was the key to wide scale Tour Guide training, five years ago in conjunction with Murdoch University and Tourism Council WA, Global Gypsies developed *Safari Guide Workshops* - Australia's first basic, weekend introductory course for Tour Guides operating in remote areas.

The new course builds on this foundation but the grant has made it possible to expand the content to appeal to Tour Guides working in diverse locations, to incorporate accreditation from a highly respected learning institution and to subsidise the attendance fee in order to attract wide participation. The actual cost of the course is \$395 per person, but the grant enables the attendance fee to be reduced to just \$295 per person during the pilot program.

Anthea Kilminster, Executive Officer of the WA Hospitality and Tourism Industry Training Council says, "We believe this new course will be invaluable to WA Tour Guides and will be a tremendous asset to the State's tourism industry."

**For more details or to request an information booklet, contact Global Gypsies on
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